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## THE *THESAURUS LINGUAE LATINAE*: *COMES IT*

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In reading Virgil with my pupils I became interested in the turn, *it comes alicui*. The point that interested me was the predicative use of *comes* with a verb of motion; *it comes* is so like English "goes *with*" or German "geht *mit*" and the only wonder is that *comes* did not develop into a preposition. How a nominative may develop into a preposition anybody can see who will investigate the word *adversus*. I wonder if it interests our teachers to know that *adversus* and *prorsus* and *rursus* and more are participles of *verto*, or perhaps I should write *vertor*, in the nominative. If that does not interest them it were worse than futile to ask them to look at the usage of *comes* to see how it might have become a preposition but never did. And no teacher, whether "practical" or otherwise, need blush if his curiosity is not equally stimulated by every possible problem that his texts might suggest. It would be a pity, though, for a Virgil teacher interested in the Laokoön group to take a sniffy attitude to the Virgilian *comes* in the dative, and I am not going to ask for any indulgence for printing the Virgilian examples of *comes* predicatively used with verbs of motion, as follows:

### A. WITH *ire*

- Aen.* 2. 704: nec tibi comes ire recuso (1272. 58)  
6. 158: cui fidus Achates | it comes (*ibid.* 45)  
6. 447: his Laodamia | it comes (*ibid.* 45)  
8. 466: illi comes ibat Achates (*ibid.* 46)  
12. 881: possem . . . fratri comes ire

This usage was perfectly normal Latin as early as

Plautus, *Amph.* 929: iuben mi ire comites (1772. 57)

wherein, as substantially always with *iubeo*, the natural subject of the infinitive, here *ancillas*, is suppressed.

### B. WITH OTHER VERBS OF MOTION

- Aen.* 9. 223: ipse comes Niso graditur (1772. 46)  
11. 479: subvehitur . . . iuxtaque comes Lavinia (1769. 51)

## C. WITH CAUSATIVE VERBS OF MOTION

- Aen.* 2. 86: illi me comitem . . . . pater . . . . misit (1770. 66)  
 9. 177: comitem Aeneae quem miserat Ida (*ibid.* 67)  
 12. 362: huic comitem Asbyten . . . . mittit (1774. 59)

## D. EXAMPLES NOT ENTIRELY ALIEN

- Aen.* 6. 528: inrumpunt . . . . comes additur una . . . . Aeolides (1770. 73)  
 6. 777: avo comitem sese . . . . addet (*ibid.* 73)  
 9. 649: comitem Ascanio pater addidit (*ibid.* 73)  
 9. 762: addit Halym comitem (*ibid.* 73)  
 11. 33: comes . . . . caro datus ibat alumno (*ibid.* 57)  
 8. 308: ibat rex obsitus aevo  
           et comitem Aenean iuxta natumque tenebat (*ibid.* 76)  
 2. 778: nec te comitem hinc portare Creusam | fas (*ibid.* 70)

In the above examples I have added references to the place in which they are cited in the *Thesaurus linguae Latinae*. One can realize how widely scattered these are in the diffuse rubrication of that massive work. At 1769. 44 f. the *Thesaurus* has the rubric: *de usu; saepissime praedicative substantivo vel pronomini apponitur*. Here we find none of the Virgil instances save 11. 479, given above under B. That is because the other examples have a dative regimen for which the *Thesaurus* has provided a special rubric at 1772. 43 f., without any cross-references back.

Other instances of our locution, so far as the *Thesaurus* gives a control, are:

## A'

- Hor. *Ep.* 1. 7. 76: iubetur rura comes ire (1770. 24)  
 Tib. 1. 4. 41: neu comes ire neges (1769. 54)  
 Prop. 4. 5. 46: i comes (*ibid.* 54)  
 Ov. *Am.* 1. 4. 15: vultu comes ipsa modesto ibis (*ibid.* 54; 1770. 25)  
       *Am.* 2. 16. 17: comites iussissent ire puellas (1770. 25)  
       *Ars.* 3. 636: comites ire vetantur (*ibid.* 25)  
       *Met.* 10. 171: non recusat . . . . isse comes (*ibid.* 25)  
 Sil. 15. 153: it comes Ausonia (*ibid.* 25)  
 Stat. *Th.* 4. 59: it comes Ephyre (*ibid.* 26)

## B'

- Ov. *Epist.* 4. 102: ipse comes veniam (1770. 29)  
 Sen. *H.F.* 584, *Med.* 947: perge comes (1770. 40)  
       *Oed.* 290: accelerat comes (*ibid.* f.)  
       *Phaedr.* 600: abeat comes (*ibid.* f.)

B'' EXAMPLES WITH *sequitur*

Plaut. *Mc.* 404: neque illa matrem . . . sequi poterit comes (1769. 44; 1770. 4 f.)

Ov. *Met.* 9. 786: sequitur comes Iphis euntem (1770. 6)

None of the other cases collected at this place by the *Thesaurus* seems genuinely predicative. The constraint of the rubric separates right widely, because the subject is non-personal, the following:

Lucr. 3. 400: comes insequitur <anima> (1775. 24)

5. 471: sequitur . . . comes una . . . Ceres (*ibid.* 27)

If the statistics offered for *comes* predicatively and with verbs of motion do not interest the reader on the syntactical side—and personally I have felt some interest in the more or less tautological combinations with *una* and *iuxta*, even with *datus*—it may have been practically worth while to present them as an object-lesson in the rubrication of the *Thesaurus*. In the citations given, six full columns are referred to and in such a way that nobody would guess how nearly phraseological *it comes* has become. After spying about and thinking he had located all the possible places of the rubric his eye might fall, as mine did but now, on

Petron. 124. 252 huic [*sc.* Paci] comes it . . . Fides (1776. 58),

which takes him a full column farther on, and is rubricated under *C, de re incorporea*, 3. *c. dativo, b. personae*.

I think I realize the difficulties of classification and I am far from a desire to subject the *Thesaurus* to captious criticism. I would rather point out to the student of insistent curiosity that the *Thesaurus* is a tool that will not sensibly diminish his need of the philologist's proverbial patience. He may rather find that he has in it a new labyrinth to thread. For my own part, I wish that our labyrinth might be more expeditiously—but not hastily—brought to completion. Individual students will now procure, every conscientious high-school Latin teacher ought to procure, even though it will cost him not far from \$20, the *Epitome*, which will be the only Ariadne's thread for the labyrinth. But as the epitome will contain no English definitions, it will not be quite easy to use. The lack of renderings may tempt energetic students, however, to make their own, which should be a far more improving process than it is to hunt for a rendering in the lexicon.

Dare I cite at the end, by way of *envoi*, a fine irony—for it is a fine irony—of Varro's (*De L.L.* 8. 27): "Praeterea quous utilitatis causa quaeque res est inventa, si ex ea quis sit consecutus, amplius eam scrutari . . . . nimium otiosi <est>"? Here *otiosi* is a thing for the scholar, the man of the σχολή, i.e., of leisure, to ponder. Insistent curiosity is the rule of the game. Those to whom this curiosity seems an idle thing call it *loafing*, and the scholar a *loafer* (*otiosus*). The *Thesaurus* will doubtless not fail to interpret Varro's *otiosi est* by adducing from Pliny (*N.H.* praef. 6): *humili vulgo scripta sunt . . . . denique studiorum otiosis*. The condition of scholarship is contemplation, which the practical public, many presidents and deans, and whole droves of professors and doctors, openly or innerly, regard as *otiositas*. Their own activity—they do not recognize it, in spite of critics like Pierre Loti, as πολυπραγμοσύνη.